(iii) Providing commission of 1% of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) to all societies engaged by the State Governments from procurement of foodgrains.

(iv) Reimbursement of full cost of freight, including transportation of foodgrains from the rail head to the procurement centres

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per the recommendations of these Conferences all the State Governments/UT administrations have been instructed, amongst other things, to ensure that all families at the risk of hunger including migrant labour/displaced persons/homeless population are issued ration entitlement authority slips; priority is given to Cooperatives of women and Ex-servicemen in the matter of allotting Fair Price Shop licenses; priority is given in the allotment of Fair Price Shops to the legal heirs of a Fair licencee, publicizing the information about the scale of issue, the price of foodgrains, availability, decentralized procurement of foodgrains etc. so as to make the PDS cost effective as well as to cater to local taste.

Warning for hoarding of essential commodities

496. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have warned the traders in urban areas not to indulge in hoarding of essential commodities, sugar, crude oil, etc.;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to import sugar to keep the price under control; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government does not undertake any import of sugar. Sugar is on OGL (Open General License) and is freely importable as per the

commercial prudence of the importers. However, as per the prevailing EXIM policy of the Government, all commodities, including raw sugar can also be imported by actual users against Advance Licenses (ALs) obtained under the Duty Exemption Entitlement Certificates (DEEC) Scheme, under which such imports are exempted from duties but are subject to export obligation to be fulfilled within the stiplulated period.

Standards for quality of food itmes

†497. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bureau of Indian Standards have submitted any draft in respect of quality of food-items;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether items not conforming the quality standards of the B.I.S. are sold in the Indian market; and

(d) if so, the steps likely to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has not issued a common standard/draft standard in respect of quality of food items as the responsibility of fixing quality norms for food products including conformity with Indian Standards rests with Prevention of Food Adulteration Act under Minister of Health and Family Welfare.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Corruption in PDS

498. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the rampant corruption prevailing in Public Distribution System, especially the nexus between the PDS official and the retail depot holders;

(b) if so, the number of complaints, regarding corruption etc., received during the last three years;